

Members Briefing – January 2015 (V0.3)

Wheelie Bin Roll Out – Perry Barr Depot

Districts / Wards affected:

Erdington District - Erdington, Kingstanding, Stockland Green, Tyburn

Perry Barr District - Handsworth Wood, Lozells and East Handsworth, Oscott, Perry Barr

Sutton Coldfield District - Sutton Four Oaks, Sutton New Hall, Sutton Trinity, Sutton Vesey

Timeline – 2nd February 2015 to 30th June 2015

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council was awarded £30 million of additional funding by the DCLG in 2012/13 to help transform waste collection services across the City.
- 1.2 Cabinet has chosen to move to a wheelie bin service for recycling and rubbish collections. This isn't new or unique – the vast majority of other Councils in the UK already use wheelie bins and they are proven to help reduce waste, increase recycling, reduce costs, improve street cleanliness and to increase resident satisfaction.
- 1.3 Between February and May 2013 the Council undertook a substantial public consultation exercise in relation to wheelie bins, including on-line and hard-copy public questionnaires, consultation with Protected User Groups, the Citizens Panel and District Committees.
- 1.4 The outcomes from the public consultation informed a Pilot Service Specification for the operation of wheelie bin services in two pilot Wards, Brandwood and Harborne. These Wards were selected on the basis that they comprised a range of different household types that reflected a generality of housing types across the City.
- 1.5 The pilot programme for the collection of recycling and rubbish using wheelie bins commenced from May 2013. In each of the pilot Wards 'pre-wheelie bin' and 'post-wheelie bin' surveys were carried out to ascertain whether there was any change in residents' general attitudes towards wheelie bins after the scheme had 'bedded down'. The post-wheelie bin survey results indicate that:
 - 92% of residents found the leaflet delivered with the wheelie bins to be useful or very useful
 - 91% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their wheelie bin collections
 - 77% of residents thought that the scheme had had a positive effect on the cleanliness of their neighbourhood (7% thought that it had a negative effect)
 - Concerns about a range of issues, such as storage space, bin capacity, manoeuvrability, etc. have decreased
 - 76% of residents support or strongly support the wheelie bin scheme, with only 13% opposing, or strongly opposing the scheme.

- 1.6 On the 16th September 2013, Cabinet considered and agreed a full 'Service Specification' for the new services together with proposals for the full roll out of wheelie bins across the City. In brief, Cabinet agreed the city-wide roll out of a 2 bin system, the standard service being as follows:
- For the disposal of dry recycling, each suitable household will be provided with a 240 litre grey bin with blue lid containing a 55 litre insert pod. The pod is used for paper and card recycling. Mixed materials (glass/cans/plastic bottles and tubs) are placed in the body of the wheelie bin. The bin will be collected fortnightly.
 - For the disposal of residual waste, each suitable household will be provided with a 180 litre wheelie bin. The bin will grey with a grey lid. The bin will be collected weekly.
- 1.7 The first phase of the city-wide roll out took place in June 2014 for the Montague Street Depot area covering the Wards of Aston, Ladywood, Nechells and Soho.
- 1.8 The second phase, covering some 106,000 households in the East of the City served by the Redfern Road Depot was completed on schedule in December 2014.

2 Property Assessments – Perry Barr Depot

- 2.1 A programme of individual property assessments across all 12 Wards has been completed and the data is being validated. These assessments were carried out by staff within the Fleet and Waste Management (FWM) Service who were specifically recruited and trained for this purpose. These same staff will be responsible for supervising the delivery of the bins.
- 2.2 For each property, the assessment considered whether:
- There was enough storage space for the wheelie bins
 - There was a steep slope or steep steps between the property and the road
 - There was suitable vehicle access
 - The pavement outside the property was wide enough to place a bin out on collection day
 - There was some other reason or obstruction why wheelie bins would not be suitable for that property.
- 2.3 The provisional headline results from the individual property assessments for the Perry Barr Depot area are summarised below:
- 104,133 (95.9%) are suitable for wheelie bins (green card)
 - 3,582 properties (3.3%) – are not suitable for wheelie bins (red card)
 - 881 properties (0.8%) – are HMOs etc – communal provision

- 2.4 Residents have not yet been notified of the outcomes of these individual property assessments. The data that has been collected is being cross-checked and has helped FWM to undertake preparatory work required, such as database cleansing, procuring bins and collection vehicles, determining delivery schedules, route planning, communications, etc.

3 Resident Notification of Assessment

- 3.1 From the week commencing 2nd February 2015 the Council will start notifying appropriate households, by standard Royal Mail delivery, of the outcome of their property assessment.
- 3.2 Low-rise properties that are considered suitable for wheelie bins will receive a 'green card' which informs them of the assessment and also provides them with an opportunity to request a larger rubbish bin and/or an additional recycling bin. These cards will also provide details of a BCC website link where residents can watch a video about the new bins and service.
- 3.3 Low-rise properties that are considered not suitable for wheelie bins will receive a 'red card' which informs them of the assessment and that there will be no change to their collection methodology – they will remain on a sack / recycling box collection service.
- 3.4 Houses in Multiple Occupation / Blocks of flats comprising between 4-8 properties - there is currently a mix of collection services at such properties and the opportunity is being taken to standardise these as a communal collection service for both rubbish and recycling wherever possible. This will be carried out on a bespoke basis during the spring and separately to the main roll out.
- 3.5 Blocks of high-rise flats will not receive a card. These properties are already on communal collection services with large containers and they will remain unchanged. Depending on current provision however, there may be some uplift in the provision of communal recycling facilities but this will be carried out on a bespoke basis.
- 3.6 Following the distribution of these communication cards, residents who receive a green card can notify FWM, in particular circumstances, that they would like to request a variation to the standard service – this may either be to request an additional recycling bin or to swap their standard size rubbish bin for a larger bin.
- 3.7 An additional recycling wheelie bin will be made available on request to any household who needs additional recycling capacity.
- 3.8 Larger sized rubbish bins will be made available as follows:
- Households of 6 or more people may request a 240 litre rubbish bin as the alternative to the standard 180 litre wheelie bin.
 - Households of 9 or more people may request a 360 litre rubbish bin as the alternative to the standard 180 litre wheelie bin.

- 3.9 Households' use of larger bins will be subject to review to ensure that the associated recycling provision is being used appropriately. If the recycling services are not being used appropriately, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the larger rubbish bin.
- 3.10 Residents will be asked to register any such requests (by web or phone) with FWM within 3 weeks of the cards being distributed. After this time, there will be a 'freeze' on data changes to enable the final route planning and distribution processes to be finalised.
- 3.11 Residents requesting a change after the freeze cut-off point will be told that they will receive the standard bins only as part of the main delivery programme, and that the larger bins will be delivered after that time and as soon as practical, depending on resource availability and workload. To set expectations, this may be up to a month after collections have actually started.

4 Presentation Points

- 4.1 A number of households in the Perry Barr Depot area will be asked to present their wheelie bins not outside their property, but at a designated point – a 'Presentation Point' – near to their property but which enables easy access by the collection crews. This will help to increase the operational efficiency of the collection service and is used by many other Councils in providing wheelie bin services.
- 4.2 Properties to be put onto Presentation Points will receive a 'Green Card' in the ordinary way which will tell them that they are suitable for wheelie bin collections. There will be no specific reference on the green card to a Presentation Point at this time so as to maintain a relatively straight-forward communications process.
- 4.3 Following the postal delivery of the Green Cards, Presentation Point households will be separately contacted and informed that they will be required to present their bins for collection, and to retrieve them from a specified Presentation Point.
- 4.4 This contact will be through a standard letter, hand-delivered to the door by FWM who will also take the opportunity, where residents are at home, to discuss the new services and the expectations around the Presentation Point. The exact location of the Presentation Point will be marked on a street map attached to the letter.

5 Bin delivery and communications

- 5.1 Bin deliveries for the Perry Barr Depot will be undertaken by a professional delivery company.

- 5.2 Deliveries will take place from the end of March 2015 for up to 9 weeks for all green card households. Each household will have 2 wheelie bins delivered in accordance with the standard service specification, or a variation if this was requested in the relevant period.
- 5.3 Each bin will be fitted with an 'RFID' chip that will be associated with the property address. Each bin will also be marked with an address label that states the household number to which it was delivered.
- 5.4 Each household will also be provided with a pack of information which will contain the following:
- Collection calendar
 - Bin use instruction leaflet
 - Green waste collection promotional leaflet
- 5.5 At the point of delivery the bins will be sealed with a tape which reminds residents not to put them out before the start of scheduled wheelie bin collections as identified on the calendar.

6 Start of Wheelie Bin Collections

- 6.1 Wheelie bin collections will commence from 1st June 2015.
- 6.2 Currently, the main recycling and refuse collection rounds are arranged through the provision of a crew per Ward for refuse collection. Fortnightly collection services share a crew between 2 Wards for recycling collections.
- 6.3 However, as the number of households in a Ward is a variable, and the amount of waste produced from area to area is also variable, this has led to a position where some crews have a greater workload than others, depending on the number and type of households in the Ward, and in terms of the recycling collection service, the number of households participating in that service.
- 6.4 Consequently, it is known that some rounds, on some days struggle to complete collections and additional support needs to be provided; whereas other crews have smaller workloads.
- 6.5 In conjunction with the start of wheelie bin collections, Perry Barr Depot will therefore move to a 'Zonal Collection System'. This system is operated by many other Local Authorities and is successful in reducing collection costs by eliminating the variations associated with operating within a smaller area boundary.

- 6.6 The new zonal approach to collection will see the overall Depot area split into 5 collection zones, with each zone correlating to a specific day of the week. This means each Depot will no longer operate on Ward boundaries, but instead will move to 5 zones as provisionally outlined in the attached map (Appendix 1).
- 6.7 By focussing the collection resources in a defined geographical area each day, the Service intends that the crews will be better managed to support each other to clear the totality of the day's work between them, covering for any breakdowns or unusual workloads as necessary.
- 6.8 Consequently, there will be a significant level of collection day changes for low-rise properties.
- 6.9 Following these collection day changes, residents will receive a 'same day of the week' service with refuse collected weekly, recycling collected fortnightly and green waste (where that service is subscribed to) also on a fortnightly basis through the collection season. Green waste will be collected in the alternate week to the recycling collections.

7 Enquiry Management

- 7.1 The experience to date is that there is a significant increase in the number of enquiries to FWM following the distribution of red / green cards through the bin delivery and commencement of the collection phases.
- 7.2 Enquiry types, in particular, included the following:
- Requests for assisted collections
 - Larger rubbish bin
 - Additional Recycling Bin
 - Disputing 'green card' assessment
 - Disputing 'red card' assessment
 - No bins / pod delivered
 - Damaged bin / pod delivered
- 7.3 A similar situation is expected in Perry Barr Depot area and additional resources will be available at the Contact Centre to receive calls and at the FWM back-office to process and deal with enquiries.
- 7.4 Following the start of the new collection services, and again from previous experience, there will be a temporary increase in reports of missed collections. These reports will stabilise over the following few weeks as residents and crews get used to the new services, new rounds and new collection days.

- 7.5 Additional resources will be available within the Depot to deal with missed collection reports, although the reality is often that the bin was not 'missed' but was 'tagged' and not collected for a variety of reasons – such as contaminated recycling.
- 7.6 FWM will always take a reasonable approach to these issues, particularly as the service stabilises, and the 'Waste Prevention Team' will be talking with residents about identified problems and ensuring that they know how to use the new services.

Further Information

Further information is available on our website at www.birmingham.gov.uk/refuse-collection

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